

THE GRADUATE AND THE PEOPLE.

Commencement Address,
BOSTON UNIVERSITY,

BY THE HONOURABLE WILLIAM RENWICK RIDDELL,
L.H.D., F.R. HIST. SOC., Etc.,
Justice of the Supreme Court of Ontario.

TREMONT TEMPLE, BOSTON,
Wednesday, June the Third, Nineteen Hundred and Fourteen.



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It is no small privilege which is given me this morning in being permitted to address you, young men and women of this University. For more than forty years connected more or less closely with Universities and University life, I am more and more convinced that the future of the nation and of the world depends, as it should depend, on the University—on the output of the University.

While it is not to be expected that even those who receive the benefits of the higher and the highest education will be wholly exempt from the failings and shortcomings of our common humanity, they must needs be trained to think and to discriminate, to differentiate the superficial and ephemeral from the essential and eternal.

It is with full consciousness of the manner of men and women I am addressing, that I speak: I may not carry you with me in all respects; but at least, in a University audience, careful thought must go before adjudication, reasoned judgment before condemnation as deliberate and well-grounded approbation before acceptance.

Civis Britannicus sum—Canadian to the finger tips—proud of the flag which floats over my northern home.

that flag which has braved a thousand years the battle and the breeze, I come to Boston as to the cradle of a movement which has done much to make my flag and my land what they are: Canada, a land to be desired and my British citizenship worth while. Not wholly as a stranger or a foreigner do I come, but as in some sense a kinsman—for your people and mine cannot be considered wholly alien from each other—yet I recognize that we are not of the same allegiance; and I can quite understand that it may sound strangely to the ear of an American for a non-American to speak as I have done, even if our language is the same and in great measure our descent.

It is not idle compliment but deep-felt, well-justified conviction which calls from a Canadian this tribute to your city—a sense of gratitude as well as of fellowship.

Our rugged forefathers in the infancy—or at least the childhood—of the race, met in their rude gatherings and decided the course to be pursued by sept or clan. This could not continue when the clan or sept became a nation, numerous and wide-spread; every man could not be present at a central point; the voice of every man could not be heard; only a few could be engaged in government. The experiment was tried of these few being selected by the King—the King's Council, by whatever name called—and the government of the people wholly guided by these, responsible to the one man who chose them.

That system lasted for many generations, and it is not even yet entirely effete among civilized nations. In most instances the adviser was either a priest or a noble, a man noble by birth or made noble by his Royal Master; and the ennobled and their descendants, with the higher orders of the priesthood, made a class, a preserve by itself, from which most servants of the Crown were chosen.

This could never be wholly satisfactory, and a system was adopted whereby the governed chose from among themselves representatives to express and assert their wishes, their needs, their aspirations. At first but those

who are called the upper classes were allowed to have any choice in the selection of representatives; but even then, many and bitter were the struggles between the one element, at least partially popular, and the other, a caste. The one grew more and more powerful until it could measure itself against not only the Noble class but even against the King himself; and personal rule seemed to meet its doom when the head of Charles Stuart fell at Whitehall.

But there was a recrudescence of personal and kingly rule; the class of people to choose representatives remained much the same and the representatives were subject to kingly influence, so that almost as much as before, the King ruled, though he ruled in form through these representatives—these in theory representing the people.

In the American colonies were many ardent lovers of freedom and self-government, who desired the substance as well as the form. In the Mother Country was a King who believed himself to have been specially chosen by Providence to govern; he thought that so long and so far as he could procure the majority of those who in theory were the representatives of the people, so long and so far was he entitled to govern all the people of the Realm. George III. was a sincerely pious and conscientious man; and there never was a grosser calumny than to charge the errors of his political conduct to defect in his moral character. He anxiously endeavoured to do his duty as he saw it; and his failure to govern the American Colonies wisely would have been the failure of almost any other who did not know America and Americans at first hand. His theory of government was that of most of the governing class in England at the time. Many of the American people refused to admit that persons chosen by a class in an island across the seas represented them, and insisted that they should be governed by and through representatives of their own choosing.

As under the Stuarts the century before, while most objected to arbitrary measures, the people divided not

very unequally upon whether armed resistance should be resorted to or more peaceful and moderate means adopted—divided into Roundhead and Cavalier—so under the Guelph, while most Americans resented their treatment, they divided not very unequally upon armed resistance or constitutional opposition. The Revolutionists claimed the name of Patriots—their enemies called them Rebels; the other party were detestable Tories or United Empire Loyalists, according to the point of view.

Bitter things were said by each class of the other, some of them true. Revolutions are necessarily non-moral; rosewater neither creates nor quells great public movements, and neither elections nor battles are always won by prayer alone. Time has not wholly allayed the feeling of antagonism; but it is dying out, and I, though knowing that youth is always intolerant and believing with Plato that patriotism is necessarily cruel (and I add, unjust)—nevertheless I now venture to say to a young and patriotic audience that in essence and in the main both classes were much alike, and both alike were ardent and sincere lovers of their country. Descendants of Cavalier and Roundhead can do justice to the ancestors of the other; and Daughters of the Revolution and Daughters of the Empire, the Society of the Cincinnati and the United Empire Loyalist Association might unite in their celebration and agree that each should recognize virtue in the ancestor of the other. It may not be of evil omen that Boston University is to-day holding its Commencement on the birthday of King George V.

It is idle to speak of the stamp tax, the duty upon tea, an impost here, a restriction there, as being the cause of the American Revolution. These were but the tokens, the outward excrescences, which could not hide the essential and fundamental—the determination to govern themselves, inherent in all of the descent which the Patriots claimed. Kings they could abide, for who so loyal as they, so long as they could be loyal? An appointed Governor was not only tolerated but was even regarded with affection, so long as he did not attempt

to impose upon them the will of others; but that they should be in fact governed by themselves, whatever the form, they were determined.

Nor were they insensible to the importance of carrying with them their Northern neighbour; her they desired as the fourteenth colony. Not long before, when Canada was French, the cry of the Bostonians was "Canada est delenda"—so said Governor Dummer. "Canada must be demolished—*delenda est Carthago*—or we are undone," cried Governor Livingston of New Jersey; and the pastor of the old South Church in Boston joined in the cry with statesmen throughout all New England. But now Canada become British was to be won, not destroyed; and every means was to be taken for that purpose. John Brown, the forerunner of another John Brown nearly a century later, and like him a hater of human servitude, ventured his life in a mission to Montreal. The Continental Congress addressed a letter to the Canadians; true as to our present-day taste it is, with its appeals to philosophy, it was in deadly earnest; the writers were little given to idle frivolity, and the times were already trying men's souls. When persuasion failed the sword was appealed to—the mad raid of Ethan Allen, the Argonautic expedition of Arnold, the campaign of Montgomery, which, with its early summer sunshine of success was overwhelmed with the black winter night of failure, disaster and death.

But without Canada, and in spite of her, the men of Boston and those of like mind, fought on to the triumph of their cause; for they could dream and not make dreams their master, could think and not make thoughts their aim.

You are proud of Boston and her past; and you do well. Your eyes fill with proud tears, your hearts with proud exultation when you think of Bunker Hill; and with justice. And I, a Canadian and a Briton, stand here and openly proclaim that I am as proud as you, as deeply grateful as you can be; for, as those embattled farmers stood in their stern array one hundred and forty

years ago, their ranks unwavering if uneven and owing little to the drill sergeant, filled with patriotic fervour, risking and willing to give all for freedom and self-government, they stood not only for themselves and succeeding generations of Americans, but for Canada and for every British Colony; nay (as has been said more than once) for England herself, for everything that makes England the England we know and all that makes the British Empire worth while.

The freedom they forcibly achieved for themselves, has been readily, cheerfully and ungrudgingly granted to the remaining colonies—the Commonwealth of Australia, the Dominion of New Zealand, the South African Union as well as the Dominion of Canada, are wholly self-governing, and free with a freedom which would have more than satisfied the heroes who fought on the field where Warren fell.

And the democracy fully established on this Continent reacted upon the mother country; and it is at least in part due to that reaction that now the common man has his say in the selection of those who will make laws for him. The House of Privilege, still standing in form, has been shorn of its power, it is no longer the final judge of what is right; and the King, once all-powerful, is glad to be relieved of the burden of government. The King now reigns but does not rule, while the President of the United States rules but does not reign.

The principles of freedom underlying the conception of government in the English-speaking peoples were not born in your Revolution. The Revolution was but the logical outcome of principles elaborated, declared and to a certain extent lived up to for centuries before; but the Revolution emblazoned them in letters of fire to be known and read of all men and never to be forgotten while the earth remaineth. The earth will sooner be shaken from her place and the pillars thereof sooner tremble than the fundamental right of a free man to choose his own governor fail of full fruition.

A Canadian thankfully acknowledging the leadership of this City in matters of civil freedom, may nevertheless

say with some pride that it was not Boston or Massachusetts which led in the cause of religious freedom, freedom to worship God in the form each man desired. The Pilgrim Fathers were not content to worship God in their own way, but they desired to make all others follow their method. It was the defect of the time. My own collateral ancestors on either side sealed their faith with their blood on the scaffold, but Riddell and Renwick would undoubtedly, had they had the power, been executioners and their judges the victims and they would have been perfectly confident that they were thereby doing God service and approving themselves good Christians.

We must come to Canada to find the first English-speaking country to allow complete freedom of religion. After the Reformation (I do not speak of Maryland, anomalous in many respects), Canada was the first to allow the Roman Catholic to take part in legislation and to be a freeman in every respect equal to the Protestant. And indeed it was one of the strongest charges levelled by the Continental Congress against the Imperial Government and King George that they tolerated a religion "bloody, idolatrous and hypocritical."

We have in most, if not in all, English-speaking communities got far away from the point of view of the Revolutionary fathers. We think Carroll of Carrollton just as good a patriot, as thorough a Republican as John Hancock or Samuel Adams.

But the proper course in matters pertaining to civil government may still be to discuss and to determine.

Here, then, is the true field of the University. "Let them obey who know not how to rule," said the proud Plantagenet; and he read well the signs of his times. Now, those who know not how to rule are not made slaves with no part in the Commonwealth except to serve and obey; they choose those who are to rule and in no small measure how they are to rule. We do not say "Jack is as good as his master," but it is because Jack knows no master. In the nature of things there must be leaders. It is said that during the evil days of the French Revolution a mob was hastening

past a house where sat, with a friend, one much in the public eye. "Where are they going?" said his friend. "I do not know, but I must go with them, for I am their leader," was the reply. Even in that crowd there were leaders, though perhaps not those ostensibly such—no movement is purely spontaneous. There always have been and there always will be—human nature remaining the same—men to whom their fellows look for light and guidance.

And where are they to be found? Not in the cloistered shade haunted by the recluse and the misanthrope.

Herodotus tells of the envoys sent to Delphi by the Dolonci to consult the Oracle. The Pythia said "The first man who offers you hospitality, take with you." Miltiades, son of Cypselus, sat by his door in the cool of the evening, and seeing them on the highway aweary, invited them into his house, and so became their King. Axylus sung by Homer who lived by the side of the road was the friend to man, for he loved all—

(Πάντας γὰρ φιλέσπεν, ὁδῷ ἐπὶ οἰκία ναιων.)

Diomedes, the mighty master of the warcry, slew him, but he was not a failure, his name and fame are eternal, embalmed in deathless verse.

"There are hermit souls that live withdrawn
In the place of their self content;
There are souls like stars that dwell apart
In a fellowless firmament";

and they often are the very elect; but they must be few in number.

He who shuns his fellows, may have a high mission, a lofty outlook, and he may be worthy of all praise. But there must be some to mingle with the people, to know their needs at first hand, to take an immediate and not simply a mediate part in directing their thoughts and their aspirations. Those who do that, there must always be, whether worthy or unworthy, whether for good or for ill.

Is that function to be left to the ward heeler, to the boss who makes his living by it, to the party hack with no thought above the immediate success of some scheme? It is not unusual in your land, as it is not unusual in mine, to speak contemptuously of the politician, as though it were a degradation to take part in the government of the country; a disgrace to put into practice that for which your forefathers fought and died. A Washington, a Jefferson, an Adams, a Lincoln —these may receive commendation, for they were statesmen. He was wise who first said that the difference between a politician and a statesman is that the statesman is dead.

Some one must lead; who is it to be? "Freely ye have, freely give." The inestimable gift of civil freedom, the highest privilege an honourable man may enjoy is yours as a birthright.

"We must be free or die who speak the tongue
That Shakspere spoke, the faith and morals hold
Which Milton held."

You have been educated in an institution where thought is free as the air you breathe, you have been trained to think, your whole education has been to cast off from your minds and souls the trammels of ignorance, of superstition and of cant, the example of the great and good of all ages has been ever held before your eyes and you have been taught to fear God and to eschew evil.

Noblesse oblige; and as "with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again," so with the same measure with which it has been measured to you, with that measure, mete ye.

This University was not founded simply to give information to intending ministers or doctors or lawyers or engineers. Those who bore the burden and heat of the day when Boston University was but a young and struggling institution did not have in view simply learned savants, acute theologians, skilful surgeons, astute and subtle lawyers. These indeed they hoped for and expected; but their desire was for men and women who

should indeed know their rights, and knowing dare maintain, but who should also their duty know. Brilliant graduates, graduates of compelling ability who should make their Alma Mater famous in their own fame, their faith gave them to foresee, and they have not been disappointed; but most they wished graduates who should recognize their duty to their God, to the world, to their country and their fellow-countrymen.

And it should be the glory of a University that from its walls go forth the leaders of the people. If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch; it is the function of a University to supply those who can see, who both can and will prevent their countrymen from falling into the ditches that are all too common, ditches of ignorance, ditches of prejudice, ditches of class hatred, ditches of international ill-will, ditches which lead to national discord or it may be to bloody devastating war.

"He loved his fellow men" is the greatest praise which an honourable man should covet, if that love has been made manifest in deed and not in empty rhetoric. If love of fellow men be not the effect of University study and training, better that the University should cease to exist. It is for the public service, the public good, that public support is given to such institutions of learning, and the public should in common honesty receive the reward which is due.

The neighbouring college which trained a Garfield, the venerable and historic elder sister across the way which gave this land a Roosevelt, and that of another State which produced a Taft, or another a Wilson, did not crush in their minds the desire for public service. It may be that the true place in history of some of these is not certain, but that the United States and the world are the better for their having lived, few will gainsay —big men, true men, tried men filled with a common patriotism for a common country.

All the problems of government have not been solved; many remain calling for the clearest thinking, the renunciation of prejudice, honest and sincere determination to do the thing that is right. "Because right is right,

to follow right," is "wisdom in the scorn of consequence."

As an outsider, I can see many such—the conflict between labour and capital (or rather between some who are thought to represent labour and capital), the old but ever new question of the tariff, for no tariff can be permanent, at least not without constant defence against constant attack; the problem of the black race and their uplift, upon the solution of which almost certainly will depend the prosperity of the Southern States and perhaps that of the Northern States as well; prohibition and whether it prohibits or when the evil spirit of intemperance is thought to be driven out for good, has he not simply gone and taken with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and have they not entered into the house empty, swept and garnished and dwelt there, so that the last state is worse than the first? Are noble, thoroughly educated women to have a voice in what this country is to do, or must they pay the traditional penalty, bear the traditional disability of their sex? An American woman, a graduate of Boston University, perhaps with property and certainly with brains—is she to see the navvy, descended from long generations of serfs and himself a newcomer on this continent, understanding our language but little, our institutions still less, casting his ballot, while she must stand helpless by, because God made her a woman? The specious talk about women being represented by their fathers, husbands, brothers or sons reminds one of the contention a hundred years ago that the American colonists were virtually represented in the House of Parliament; this met its well-deserved doom at the mouth of the cannon, the edge of the sword; is the other, still heard even in the cradle of the Revolution, more in accord with reason and justice? In the present system in some lands the woman can exercise an influence only as did the slave in the Roman times and later—coax, but not persuade; wheedle, but not argue; talk, but not act. I do not say that this is wrong—many of the grandest women the world ever saw think it is

right. The question must be settled not by prejudice or appeals to old-established rules and customs, but by reason, by arguments based upon justice and eternal right. Whatever be the view one may entertain, he should support it by reasoning which appeals to the intelligence—and to that kind of reasoning women are as responsive as men, for they are to at least as great an extent as men intelligent beings. They who settle—and settle right—this are as deserving as the Fathers who settled right the question of the government of the thirteen colonies—and it will not down until it is settled and settled right.

Not long ago, I asked the students of another American University to answer for themselves certain questions. (I have no opinion on these and have no right to express it if I had, for I am not an American citizen): "Is the Democrat a traitor to business prosperity? And is the Republican a traitor to the consumer? Is the Progressive a wild-eyed, impossible enthusiast? Is the Standpatter tied hand and foot to 'the interests'? Is the President of the United States a receiver of stolen goods and Wilson the nominee of the Trusts? Is Colonel Roosevelt a self-seeking demagogue who would break up a historic party for his own selfish ambition? Is the Bull Moose nothing but a big overgrown bully who thinks of nothing but himself and cannot keep away from the light however fatal that may be, or is he a noble creature, king of forest and plain, splendidly showing the way for the weaker to follow?" Some of these questions may have been answered or may have answered themselves since they were first asked nineteen months ago; but the like grave and important questions are still pending, and must in the nature of things arise from time to time. They must be answered in some way in fact and in deed, if not in word. Where are the men and women who will show how they should be answered? They should be *here*; and it was not he who hid his talent in a napkin that received the Master's word "Well done, good and faithful servant."

I have said nothing of religion. I know that this University is a Christian University, that religion is of

its very essence; that non-sectarian as it is, it does not look with indifference and unconcern upon the spiritual state of its students. Nevertheless, I have thought it well not to cite the teachings of our holy religion, but to address you purely from a secular standpoint. If, indeed, pure religion and undefiled were the mistress of thought and action, nothing I have said needed saying.

All the national questions which have been suggested, important as they are, pale almost into insignificance compared with the greater question which has tortured the world from times primeval. Our intra-national questions we can settle by the ballot, disputes between man and man we can settle by the Courts or by arbitration; how are we to settle international questions, disputes between nation and nation? Nature, red in tooth and claw, shrieks loudly "the survival of the fittest"—not the best and noblest, but the strongest, the best fitted to the environment. In a very real sense "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain." If nature were the last word of God as she is the first, we must needs bow; *sic volo, sic jubeo, stat pro ratione voluntas*; but the natural man, the carnal mind is enmity against God; the moral and ultimate governor cannot be as the brute creation; He must be as our highest thought demands.

Nothing can be good in Him
Which evil is in me,

and blood and agony and death cannot be the final argument. Might never yet made right.

The savage, unbridled by reason and justice, vindicates his right by his own strong arm. Too often the savage remains imbedded in the nation, and what it wishes it takes. It is the glory of modern civilization that all questions between individuals shall be settled by an impartial tribunal on rules based upon the eternal principles of justice and right. No personal pride or sense of personal honour justifies an individual withdrawing himself from the jurisdiction of that tribunal. How do we settle questions between peoples? and do we not sometimes think and say that national pride, national

honour demands force and justifies withdrawal of the national cause from all international adjudication?

I am not a peace-at-any-price man; war in my view is unhappily sometimes not only a right but even a duty. A standing army and a navy constitute, in the existing state of humanity, a safeguard like a police force. In the general case, however, of international disputes, war can no more be necessary than it is necessary for two persons who have a dispute to fight it out with lance or club as was the custom centuries ago in England.

Your country and mine a hundred years ago were at war—a war against which this State, the mother of heroes, protested and voted as long as she could, a war which came near to rending the Union in twain, a war which retarded the development of my Province more than a quarter of a century. I do not mean to go into the causes of that war; some of them may yet be obscure, and the whole story may not yet have been told. Neither shall I dwell upon the indirect results of the war, costly, bloody as it was. Just about a century ago, American soldiers were burning the Capital of Upper Canada and destroying the Parliament Buildings and Public Library there, kicking the volumes along the streets of York; British soldiers were destroying the Capitol at Washington. Goth and Vandal were not much worse, and yet it was the logic of war. Both peoples got tired of the fratricidal struggle and both agreed to leave off as they had begun. The war settled nothing; each set of negotiators thought they had secured—and they had secured—a triumph when they got the other side to refrain from insisting upon stipulations which would modify the *status quo ante bellum*.

We have four thousand miles of international boundary without a soldier or a fortification; we have thousands of square miles of international waters for nearly a hundred years unpolluted by the keel of a ship of war. During that hundred years there have never been difficulties so great—and there have been great difficulties—never controversies so acute—and there have been acute controversies — never misunderstandings, charges of

wrong and recriminations, heart burnings and bitter resentment so overpowering, and all these there have been and too often, that it was necessary for brother to raise up his hand against brother and dye his hand in a brother's blood.

Leaving aside the settlement of the boundary at the St. Croix River, and the mutual claims of American and Briton settled under Jay's Treaty of 1794, for these were before the War, we have since that war by peaceful means, means at least analogous to a Court, settled the boundary at Passamaquoddy Bay, along the Great Lakes and International Rivers, at Vancouver Island, at Alaska, the obligation to pay for runaway slaves taking refuge under the folds of the Union Jack and refusing to return to the land of the free and the home of the brave, for they knew that in all the broad land there was no place where they might be free, none where for them to be brave was not torture and ignominious death; the right of American fishermen to take cod, of Canadian sealers to take seal, what the United States should pay for land belonging to British subjects, for fish taken in British waters, what Britain should pay for American ships wrongly taken, and for her defective municipal laws allowing the escape of a Confederate cruiser. All these and more by arbitration; diplomacy settled the north-eastern boundary, after arbitration failed, and the boundary from the Lakes to the Pacific after threat of war (though "Fifty-four forty or fight" may have only been an election cry).

Loud cries of injured national honour, of infringement of national territory, were heard on either side of the line; but the plain common-sense, the Christian sentiment of the mass of the peoples stilled the cry of the jingo, and war was not.

The example of two such nations as these might well be followed by others, and in good time it must and will be followed. No doubt the watchman on the tower will often hear the anxious question, "Watchman, what of the night?" before, looking eastward he can say, "The morning cometh," without adding "and also the

night." But that answer will be made. Weary hearts looking for world peace will again and again be saddened by wars and rumours of wars; but these must cease at length. Christ died upon the tree to save mankind, and nineteen centuries after his sacrifice but the fringe of heathendom has heard the good news; yet his kingdom is secure, his throne as the days of Heaven.

Even if there is not to be a world peace, there may at least be peace so far as your great nation is concerned. The United States does not need to show its power, its glory is gained and is imperishable, it can be diminished only by the United States itself; the altruism exhibited in the case of Cuba, the ardent love of peace exhibited in bringing about the Conference and Treaty of Portsmouth, the self-restraint when goaded by petty shafts of malice launched by the mischief-seeking and injuries brought about by those desiring war, all are to its credit.

Are the graduates of Boston University to aid in maintaining the high standard set by their country, are they to seek peace and ensue it? If so, they must receive the blessing pronounced on the Mount upon the peacemakers.

This is not always easy; the poetry, the glamour, the romance of war is part of our common inheritance. We are fighting animals by instinct, our literature is full of battle, and the successful general becomes the President or the popular hero. Peace is tame and prosaic, it appeals not to the eye or ear, and it needs a strong heart to treasure it despite the blare of trumpets and flash of swords.

And yet it must triumph or all moral governance of the Universe is impossible. Far, far back the Hebrew prophet saw what must come to pass, unless there is nothing but blind chance. "The government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called Wonderful . . . The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end . . . The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this."

Do you believe it, and will you do your share?

